WHAT THE VICTORY OR DEFEAT OF GERMANY MEANS TO EVERY AMERICAN

(Contributed by OWEN JOHNSON to the National Security League's campaign of Patriotism Through Education.)

I have been in close touch with French public opinion not only through several trips to the front but from a long stay of ten months in France during the last year. If every American could have the same opportunity of realizing for himself why the great French nation in the fourth year of the war despite the devastation done to its territory, the loss to its manhood and the impoverishment of its women, remains steadfast in its faith, willing to combat for ten years if necessary, there would be but one opinion in America.

France understands that so long as the German military autocracy exists, with its giant obsession of a German Roman Empire subjecting all other races to the vaunted scientific efficiency of one, German Caesarism intends to destroy democracy without, in order to throttle it within.

A German victory to-day (and a peace that does not break on the battle-field the German military strength will be a German victory) means that France will have to sacrifice its democratic liberty in order to be constantly mobilized under a centralizing dictatorship. A German victory to-day means the failure of democracy in Europe and the certainty of our relinquishing our spiritual protectorate over the American hemisphere. Eventually that would mean German colonization of South and Central America, with a final, devasting contest forty years hence between us and the modern legions of a German Caesar.

While the hereditary military conception of government abides in Prussia, the world cannot continue half German and half democracy.

Owen Johnson

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